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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/673,651	11/02/2000	Pierre Bernas	198944US	1241
22850	7590	02/25/2004	EXAMINER DUONG, DUC T	
OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND, MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C. 1940 DUKE STREET ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314			ART UNIT 2663	

DATE MAILED: 02/25/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/673,651

Applicant(s)

BERNAS ET AL.

Examiner

Duc T. Duong

Art Unit

2663

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 02 November 2000.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-14 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 11-14 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 3-7 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 2 and 8-10 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 3&4.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

The changes made to 35 U.S.C. 102(e) by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) and the Intellectual Property and High Technology Technical Amendments Act of 2002 do not apply when the reference is a U.S. patent resulting directly or indirectly from an international application filed before November 29, 2000. Therefore, the prior art date of the reference is determined under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) prior to the amendment by the AIPA (pre-AIPA 35 U.S.C. 102(e)).

2. Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Sheu (U.S. Patent 5,781,715).

Regarding to claim 1, Sheu discloses a network for distributing information between a central unit 20 and stations 32-34 (Fig. 2 col. 2 lines 57-65), comprising information splitting devices 22-28 with inputs/outputs P/S connected on the one hand to the central unit and on the other hand to the stations (Fig. 2 col. 2 lines 66-67 and col. 3 lines 1-4), an interface device in each station (implicitly shown), characterized in that the interface device of each station is linked to a first splitting device and to a second splitting device (Fig. 2 col. 3 lines 25-36).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 3-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sheu.

Regarding to claim 3, Sheu discloses a means for detecting a fault relating to a problem on a link between this interface device and the first or the second splitting device (col. 5 lines 14-23).

Sheu fails to teach the means is arranged in the interface device of the station.

However, to arrange such means in the interface device of the station would have been obvious to one of skill in the art to lessen the load of functions being by the central unit.

Regarding to claim 4, Sheu discloses the means for detecting faults comprises means for mutual acknowledgement with the central unit (Fig. 4 col. 4 lines 36-55).

Regarding to claim 5, Sheu discloses a device for switching over from the first splitting device to the second splitting device (col. 3 lines 52-60).

Regarding to claim 6, Sheu discloses the switching device is in the central unit (col. 3 lines 61-67 and col. 4 lines 1-4).

5. Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sheu in view of Gagliardi et al (U.S. Patent 5,442,630).

Regarding to claim 7, Sheu discloses all the limitation with respect to claim 1, except a link between a splitting device and an interface device is effected with a cable having two twisted conductors. However, Gagliardi discloses a system using various interconnected transmission medium such as coaxial cable, twisted wire pairs, etc (col. 1 lines 42-45). Thus, it would have been obvious to one of skilled in the art to include the various interconnected transmission medium as taught by Gagliardi in Sheu's system for different rate of data transfer required.

Allowable Subject Matter

6. Claims 2, 8-10 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

7. Claims 11-14 are allowed.

The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: The prior art of record fails to teach or make obvious the steps of or means for "N splitting devices are linked, according to a star topology, to a central unit with the aid of transport means over each of which a primary stream travels, to a splitting device of rank m there corresponds a primary stream FP_m ", when such splitting devices are considered within the specific structure of the device recited in claim 11.

Conclusion

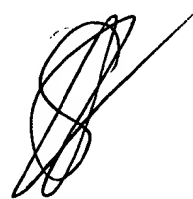
8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Duc T. Duong whose telephone number is 703-605-5146. The examiner can normally be reached on M-Th (8:30 AM-5:30 PM).

Art Unit: 2663

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Chau T. Nguyen can be reached on 703-308-5340. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

DD



STEVEN H. D. NGUYEN
PRIMARY EXAMINER